A

LETTER

TO

MR. PAIN,

ON HIS

LATE PUBLICATION.

Whoever attempts to disturb the peace of Society, or to detach men from the Government of their choice and creation, under which they feel themselves happy and secure, can neither be a wise nor a good man. *Letters of Neptune.*

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PREFACE.

IF men became better or wiſer by the multiplication of books, the world would be much indebted to whoever commits their thoughts to paper, and the obligation would increaſe in proportion as they were qualified to inſtruct mankind, or was influenced by a deſire to meliorate their condition. Unfortunately for the public tranquillity, and, indeed, for public morals, the reverſe of this is the fact, and we have an inundation of Authors without learning or genius, and what is ſtill more lamentable, without principle, whoſe talent is ſcurrility, and whoſe object is ſedition and plunder.

That ſuch men ſhould have the capacity to do miſchief, may, perhaps, be queſtioned; and if they confined themſelves to ſubjects in which neither religion nor politics were introduced, this capacity may be altogether denied them; but the misfortune is, that both are brought into diſcuſſion with a licence as alarming as it is indecent and unexampled, and which, unleſs reſtrained, muſt eventually be productive of much ſerious calamity to all ranks and deſcriptions of people. If the ſcurrility and dangerous tenets with which the public prints abound, and from the publication of which the wretched herd of profligate ſcribblers derive a ſcanty and precarious maintenance, excite our concern, that concern will neceſſarily be augmented, when we ſee men of ſuperior talents and information pervert or proſtitute their abilities for the ſorry and criminal purpoſe of creating to themſelves a momentary popularity with the multi-

tude, or for the leſs pardonable purpoſe of exciting them to riot and revolt.

Nothing can be of greater import to ſociety than the preſervation of order.—Without it, this world would become a ſavage and ſteril wild, full of difficulties and of danger, affording neither peace nor comfort to its miſerable and diſperſed inhabitants; and yet it is this very order, ſo neceſſary to our felicity and ſupport, and which ſweetens exiſtence and confirms our happineſs, that is attempted to be deſtroyed. Every reaſonable man will allow, that both theſe deſcriptions of people are little better than peſts, which prudent men will do well to avoid, for there are vices as well as diſeaſes that are contagious, and infect thoſe who approach them. If ſuch as I have deſcribed are offenſive and obnoxious, thoſe are much more ſo who ſeek to deſtroy the moſt beautiful and moſt ancient production of Britiſh wiſdom and heroiſm; and who,

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arrogating to themſelves the power and capacity which belong to none of us, individually, but to all of us collectively, would reduce us to the inſignificance of cyphers, or whatever elſe in their profound wiſdom and juſtice they would pleaſe to make of us.

For my part, I have ever conſidered the Britiſh Conſtitution as an hiſtorical painting of prodigious beauty and magnitude, executed by the moſt eminent maſters, in which the progreſs of civilization from the date of Magna Charta to that of the Bill of Rights may be ſeen at one view; nor does it require any extraordinary effort of the imagination to perſonify and repreſent to itſelf this vaſt and wonderful aſſemblage of laws, manners, and cuſtoms, on which the whole fabric of ſociety has been conſtructed, and happily brought to perfection.—The mind dwells with pleaſure on the fictions it creates, while reaſon, an accomplice in the cheat,

cheat, ſhapes them into form, and deceives the judgement into a belief of their exiſtence. The ſublime and intereſting picture above-mentioned is conſtantly before me—I ſtudy it with attention, and gaze in rapture on the glorious achievements of our heroic anceſtors—I behold them in the very dawn and infancy of reaſon, before the mild but irreſiſtible influence of manners prevailed, *repelling* Deſpotiſm, and *reſtraining* Anarchy, until, from a chaos of rude and diſcordant materials, a rational, and well harmonized ſyſtem of Government aroſe, the pride and wonder of mankind, of which the KING, LORDS, and COMMONS, were declared to be the *perpetual* and *hereditary* Guardians. To them alone are confided our civil and religious liberties; they hold them in truſt for *us* and our *heirs* for ever; and where can we find TRUSTEES of more wiſdom and integrity, or of equal reſponſibility?—The pleaſure, however, reſulting from the contemplation of this excellent and inſtructive picture,

ture, has been much diminiſhed of late, by the apprehenſions I have felt for its ſafety, ſince a confederacy of ſhameleſs and nameleſs beings, artfully diſperſed throughout the kingdom, have ſuddenly ſtarted up, and from motives more eaſily avowed than juſtified, have taken upon them to decry it in every village and pariſh in England.—But I truſt that their efforts to decry what deſerves to be ſo much admired, and what it is the intereſt of all to ſupport, will prove fruitleſs, and that the Britiſh Conſtitution will continue to be the fence and rampart of Religion and of Virtue, as it has ever been that of Learning and of Freedom, and that it will ſucceſsfully reſiſt every effort to injure it, until it falls in the general wreck and diſſolution of the World.

A man diſtinguiſhed more by his crimes than by his talents, and who ſeems to brave public opinion, with an effrontery, bordering upon inſanity, has forced himſelf on

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our notice by two very daring attempts to put us out of humour with our Conſtitution.—If diſſatisfied with Government, we were in commotion, and ſeriouſly occupied about giving ourſelves another Conſtitution, (for a better is impoſſible) we had applied to him for advice, ſome excuſe might have been offered for the licence he has preſumed to take with our patience and our underſtanding, but the Country is in a ſtate of perfect tranquillity—its condition can ſcarce be improved—all the purpoſes for which men enter into ſociety are as completely anſwered and as perfectly ſecured, as the wiſdom of man and the mutability of things will permit. Under theſe circumſtances we have no occaſion for his opinion, and to give it unneceſſarily and unaſked, argues miſchief and impertinence, not friendſhip.—Nor is the manner in which he has taken upon him to preſcribe and dictate to us leſs offenſive than the matter.—It implies, that intellect among us is almoſt at as low

an ebb in his eſtimation as French Aſſignats are in that of the World. * In proportion as this *extraordinary perſonage* degrades our mental faculties, he exalts his own, and iſſuing from the high court of *his* authority, a ſtatute of lunacy againſt the whole human race, bankrupts every Government on the ſurface of the globe, and ſtands forward the Lycurgus of the age, to legiſlate, not for any particular ſtate or kingdom, but for all mankind.

If we are that oppreſſed and ruined people which he deſcribes us to be, he is counteracting his own *beneficent* views, by exciting us to revolt.—The wiſer plan would be to leave Government to accelerate (by what he calls its accumulating guilt and abſurdities) its own deſtruction. He ſhould not interrupt the ſettled order of events, by pro-

* They were when the laſt accounts left Paris the 19th inſt. February, 1792, at 65 per cent diſcount.

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voking a *premature* revolution that may not go to the *full extent* of his *wiſhes* and *wiſdom*, and that might, poſſibly, be defeated before it is *accompliſhed*.

He ſhould leave things to their natural courſe ;—there always has been, we know to a certainty that there is yet, and we truſt there ever will, remain in this Country a ſufficient ſpirit ready and willing to reſiſt, and to reſiſt ſucceſsfully, we hope, every attempt that may be made by deſpotiſm to oppreſs or inſult it. To ſuppoſe that we are leſs vigilant to preſerve, and leſs ready to defend our rights than *Frenchmen*, is to give the lie to all hiſtory and experience, and to ſuppoſe us to be leſs enlightened and leſs brave than our neighbours.

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LETTER

TO

MR. PAIN.

SIR,

TWO Pamphlets in a very ſhort period have been uſhered to our notice with a parade and oſtentation that ill correſponds with the ſimplicity you affect. I ſhould have thought it more conducive to the avowed object of your Publications, to have left your Readers to eſtimate the force of your arguments, and to judge of the purity of your intentions: but it is the character of vanity to be talkative, and the extent which it ſeems to have taken poſſeſſion of you may account for, though it cannot excuſe, the egotiſm we meet with in every page, and almoſt in every line of your writings. In allowing us ſo ſmall a portion of intellect,

and a ſtill leſs portion of knowledge, you reduce us to a ſtate of childhood and imbecility; you ſeem to conſider all mankind in a ſtate of infancy, and ſuppoſing yourſelf alone arrived at maturity, you claim as a right the guardianſhip of the whole human race. How far you may be qualified for the important taſk, may be collected from the hiſtory of your life; and though we may ſmile at the folly of preſcribing to the world the conduct it ſhould obſerve, we cannot but reprobate the inſolence that would uſurp a dominion over our minds, and reduce us to a ſtate of mental ſlavery, more deplorable in proſpect, and more horrible in its effects, than the deſpotiſm you declaim againſt. The purport of this Addreſs is, to invite you to a reviſion of your labours. Perhaps it would have been more regular to have recommended you to inveſtigate your principles and motives, as a preparatory ſtep to this meaſure; but habit appears to have confirmed the one beyond the poſſibility of ſelf-correction, and little hope can be entertained of ſhame or contrition from the other, when we ſee the triumph of ſucceſsful villainy anticipated and avowed with an audacity that would

would put vice and impudence to the bluſh in any other man.

We are told, and that with as much gravity as if we had not been ſpectators of the event, that the Revolution in America owes its origin and concluſion to your efforts. Surely, Sir, you forget that there are men in this country who have a prior right to the *honours* you would arrogate to yourſelf on that occaſion, and who would feel hurt even at the idea of dividing them with you.

Without entering into the detail of a conteſt, which was as idly provoked as it was ill conducted, and in the courſe of which, America having juſtice on her ſide, diſplayed equal courage and prudence, we may venture to place to the account of the preſent Lord Guildford the event which you would aſcribe to yourſelf.

It is in the hiſtory of his Lordſhip's Adminiſtration that you are to look for the cauſe of that ſciſſure in the Britiſh Empire, and not in the *energetic* productions that flowed from your pen; even that accom-

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pliſhed orator and dramatic writer, the mild and modeſt Burgoyne, diffident as he is known to be, muſt feel hurt at the little account you make of his defeat at Saratoga.

I ſhould be ſorry, Sir, to deprive you of your ſhare of merit on that memorable occaſion; but I am diſpoſed to believe, that we ſhall ceaſe to think you a party in that affair whenever you ceaſe to remind us of it. Your name to a certainty will be unknown to poſterity, and the Miniſter that idly provoked the war, and thoſe whom he employed to conduct it, will alone have the glory and eclat of a tranſaction which you would perſuade us, was planned by your wiſdom, and produced by your exertion. The aſſertion, however, of your having effected the Revolution in America is in itſelf of little import, it proves nothing but an exceſs of vanity, and only reminds us of the fable of the Fly on the Coach-wheel; but the menace that accompanies it, and the inference you would have us draw from it, are of ſerious concern to every individual in the kingdom, and ſhall be noticed.

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There is always an obligation due to bad men whenever they reveal their intentions; preſuming upon the lenity of our laws, more than upon the equity of your deſigns, you come forward with a boldneſs that eclipſes even the licence of modern times, and propoſe to an entire nation enjoying perfect tranquillity from without, and perfect ſecurity within—to a nation in a ſtate of proſperity unexampled in the hiſtory of mankind, and happy in its government, a total ſubverſion of its Laws and Conſtitution!

Such a propoſition at any other ſeaſon would be treated with ridicule, and the man who made it ſuppoſed to have eſcaped from Bedlam; but at this moment, and in the ferment that agitate men's minds on the continent, it is turpitude, not inſanity, inaſmuch as it aims to accompliſh the miſchiefs it recommends, and would involve an entire country and people in ruin.

Your efforts are not directed againſt any particular Government, but againſt all Governments. It is not new regulations that you would eſtabliſh, but old ones that you would aboliſh.

aboliſh. Order, it ſeems, is to be ſubverted, not preſerved, and war declared, not againſt Prieſts or Sovereigns; not againſt Superſtition or Deſpotiſm; not againſt Monarchy, Ariſtocracy, or Republicaniſm; but againſt Civil Society in general, and under whatever form it may exiſt.

The whole human race is included in this terrible proſcription; and from this wild and ruthleſs chaos of accumulated crimes and follies, you pretend that wiſdom and juſtice will ariſe and baſtardize their parents. It is vexatious in the extreme, Sir, to ſee talents that might prove uſeful to mankind ſo ſhamefully perverted. The ſtrong and comprehenſive powers of your mind entitle you to a diſtinguiſhed rank in ſociety: but while we reverence your abilities, we lament, as a misfortune to yourſelf and others, that your diſcretion and rectitude (we mean rectitude in argument, for it does not become us to notice any other) ſhould bear no proportion to the genius and activity of your mind. It is impoſſible to reply, with any tolerable preciſion, to the variety of miſcellaneous matter which has fallen under your obſervation, and

which, though diſtantly connected with the great object of your embaſſy to this country, (*the ſubverſion of order and extinction of property*) does not deſerve either immediate or particular notice.

Your publication, as far as it relates to the Laws and Government of this Country, is not only a direct attack upon the Conſtitution, but upon the conduct and principles of the Nation at large! It is as much a libel on the good ſenſe and integrity of the People as on the King, Lords, and Commons. It not only aſſerts that the repreſentation is defective, the peerage uſeleſs, and the monarchy burthenſome and diſgraceful, but that we are accomplices in the guilt that plunders and inſults us. It is not uſual to traduce thoſe whom we would perſuade or win to our purpoſe, nor is it the ſureſt method to make men think highly of the force and extent of their mental faculties by depreciating their underſtanding. To convert us by abuſing us, is, as far as my reading and experience enable me to judge, unprecedented in controverſy, and the more likely to confirm error than remove it. After much

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wild and rude invectives againſt ſtates, individuals, maxims, and received opinions in general, you inform us that Lord North * wanted modeſty, that Mr. Fox wants firmneſs, and Mr. Pitt conſiſtency. I am afraid, Sir, that you are difficult, and that names, not principles, influence your judgement. There are but two men who appear to have been fortunate enough to deſerve your commendation, and theſe you ſeem to idolize. The reſt of the human race, with very few exceptions, are thrown into the back ground as rubbiſh, a filthy and promiſcuous maſs of guilt and folly, unworthy of notice or regard. It is the nature of ſome men to be always in the extreme; and even allowing you to be of that deſcription, and to be made up of affections and averſions, we cannot read the prodigality of praiſe you have beſtowed on Monſieur de la Fayette without arraigning either your ſincerity or your judgement. I am not an indifferent judge of mankind, and an intimacy with that Gentleman enables me to appreciate his character with tolerable accuracy. I do not mean to call in queſtion at preſent either the politics or the morals of your friend.

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* Preſent Lord Guildford.

They are upon the whole, perhaps, leſs exceptionable than thoſe of his countrymen in general, and when they are not ſo, it may be the reſult of accident more than of any natural or acquired propenſity in him to deceive. There is an apparent frankneſs in his exterior, which ſeems to war with his education, and his vices may poſſibly be the effect of neceſſity or of example, rather than of habit or principle. We will not inquire what degree of duplicity, what depth of deſign, or what ſecret and unrevealed projects of political ambition may be concealed from vulgar inſpection, under the gaudy and faſcinating varniſh of elegant and affable manners. Whenever the queſtion is propoſed, be aſſured, Sir, it can be anſwered without conſulting the Delphic Oracle.—Whatever *his* views may be, we are no longer unacquainted with the great *object* of your miſſion in this Country. You tell us in direct terms, that "*France can* "*neither enjoy peace nor ſecurity until ſhe is* "*ſurrounded with Revolutions.*" Here, Sir, is a full diſcovery of your deſign, and we thank you for the communication.—It is, therefore, to ſecure *that* Country, and not

to meliorate the condition of *this*, that you have been diſpatched from Paris to London, to preach ſedition and excite inſurrections in England. The peace and proſperity of eight millions of your fellow creatures (I had almoſt called them by the more endearing name of Countrymen) are not even regarded as ſecondary conſiderations, they are not to be taken into the ſcheme of your benevolence, not even as a contingency. The people of this country are required to engage in riot and revolt, not for their own particular advantage, but for that of others, and if any good ſhould, contrary to all probability, reſult from it, they are not certain they will be permitted to enjoy it; for the object of their anarchy and confuſion is, to give peace and ſecurity to France, not comfort and happineſs to themſelves.—No benefit is promiſed as a boon beforehand, nor as a recompence afterwards—no flattering hope is held out to them, even in perſpective, of any equivalent for relinquiſhing preſent eaſe and comfort, and ſacrificing at a venture, and for no one poſſible good to themſelves, all that renders life deſireable or ſupportable. Surely, Sir, you muſt have departed from your accuſtomed

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prudence, as well as from every idea of duty and reſpect to mankind, when you urged us to plunge into rebellion, for no other purpoſe than to guarantee rapine, proſcription, and maſſacre, in France! Are we, then, to become a rampart to iniquity; the bondſmen of aſſaſſins and of public robbers? Of men immerſed in every ſpecies of guilt that degrades manhood, and renders this world a wilderneſs of crimes? Muſt we in conjunction with other nations form a ring-fence, as it were, round France, while, loſt to all ſenſe of honour and of virtue, ſhe revels with impunity in every enormity, and ſets religion and morals at defiance? It is ſcarce within the ſcope and reach of thought that ſuch an expectation could exiſt in any well organiſed brain, much leſs that it ſhould be expreſſed and publicly avowed. Yet, Sir, ſuch is the expectation that you have dared to publiſh; it ſtands recorded in your dedication, unencumbered by conditions, and unaccompanied by any aſſurance of national benefit to us in return.

Here is a plain avowal of your deſign; and as far as that avowal puts us on our

guard, and enables us to counteract the miſchief you profeſs, we are obliged to you.

The buſineſs of Parliamentary reform is not mentioned—no antipathy to Kings and Peers is expreſſed, nor the burthen of taxes complained of, or any other civil or political grievance ſtated, in order to be redreſſed.—"*France*," you ſay, "*muſt be ſurrounded with* "*Revolutions before ſhe will be in peace and* "*ſafety*;" and for this ſolitary purpoſe we are called upon with an effrontery, unexampled in the hiſtory of libellous and ſeditious publications, to renounce not only the Conſtitution and Government under which we happily live, but to relinquiſh our prejudices, our attachments, and affections, and to throw them from us as aliens and as enemies! to renounce all that education, duty, and habit, have imprinted on our hearts and minds, and to give up, without a pang or a ſigh, all thoſe tender and endearing ties that bind us to each other, and conſtitute the charm of exiſtence!—Even the obligations of religion, ſacred and immutable as they are, are expected to fall in the general wreck, and what connects us, as it were,

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with Heaven and eternity, relinquiſhed and denied!

Can the "*peace of France*" (for which you ſeem ſo indecently anxious) be obtained on no other terms than by a war with reaſon and humanity? Muſt her felicity be purchaſed by ſo much ſorrow and aggravated calamity? Muſt the extinction of the various nations in Europe be the price of her exiſtence and ſecurity? And can her repoſe be found only in the deſpondency and ruin of the human race?

The imagination ſtartles at the idea; and it may well be aſked, Sir, in what infernal ſeminary of foul and prepoſterous guilt you have been ſchooled into ſuch maxims of right and humanity? Men who deliver their ſentiments under the influence of paſſion or reſentment are ſeldom conſiſtent—all connexity and method in their minds are deſtroyed, and they are often more at variance with themſelves than with others.—After the avowal contained in your addreſs to M. de la Fayette, and which, it is well known, correſponds exactly with his ſentiments and his conduct,

duct,* we did not expect that you would condescend to notice our Constitution. Its improvement or existence can be of no consequence to you, nor can its preservation have any share in the vast and splendid projects you have formed for governing the world.—Having asserted in the dedication of your late pamphlet, that France could not be secured but by civil commotions in other countries, it is evident that tumult and disorder are your objects.—If the peace of *that* Country can only be preserved by insurrection in *this*, why repair what you call blemishes in our Constitution, when the very removal of those blemishes would necessarily put an end to those commotions which you are so desirous to excite, and from whence alone you pretend that France can derive security? The solid and compact mass of civil society, it seems, must be dissolved in the furnace of rebellion, and kept in a continual state of fusion. Nothing less, we are told, will satisfy the inordinate appetite of this new-discovered monster, and

* It is a truth well known, that Emissaries were sent by this Gentleman, as well as by the Jacobine Club, into this country and Ireland, to excite a rebellion.

unleſs another Theſeus comes to our reſcue, the half of Europe may be ſacrificed to the relentleſs and inſatiate cruelty of this modern Minotaur. It is really, Sir, painful to refute ſuch reaſoning; but the efforts employed to excite ſedition render it a duty, and the intereſts of ſociety require that your views and abſurdities ſhould be expoſed.

I am afraid, Sir, there is ſomething uncommonly perverſe in your character. Allowing you to have had the part you pretend in the American Revolution, it was natural to ſuppoſe you would have "*ſit ſerenely* "*down, and have enjoyed the calm.*" The ſcene was at once novel and inſtructive, and having taught men to recover their rights, your *inquiſitive* and *philoſophic* mind might have found a ſource of perpetual delight in obſerving the manner in which thoſe rights were exerciſed. America, by your own account, had a kind of filial claim to your parental and ſuperintending vigilance; and, conſidering the ſhare that you ſay you had in her emancipation, it is aſtoniſhing you did not feel an irreſiſtible inclination to contemplate your own work, and direct that reaſon in its progreſs to perfection, which, according to your

your report, you firſt taught to dawn in the Weſtern hemiſphere. There is not a more pleaſing ſubject for contemplation to virtuous and benevolent minds, than the progreſs of reaſon from infancy to maturity. It is the genuine and animating rout of knowledge, which it is impoſſible to follow or behold at any period of our lives without ſome advantage to ourſelves. It is the converſion of ignorance by ſlow and gradual means to wiſdom; and it is poſſible, Sir, that even a very trifling attention to the proceſs might have improved your morals and your underſtanding: but the mild and uſeful arts of peace appear to have no hold on your affections; they have nothing in them correſpondent with the ſtrange and diſcordant nature of your ambition; and no ſooner was tranquillity eſtabliſhed in America, than you flew to Europe with the rapidity of thought in purſuit of new adventures. You diſcarded your adopted child with as little regret as you forſook your parent country; and renouncing, with an unnatural apathy, every obligation of filial reſpect and of paternal fondneſs—renouncing even all ſocial intercourſe with the world, and every tie that links man to man in the great confederacy of nations, we find

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you by choice, not neceſſity, a poor and ſorry outcaſt, a vagrant on the ſurface of the globe, without a country or an home to fly to, or that you can call your own. To an active and well-diſpoſed mind America preſented a wide and delightful field for ſpeculation and for honeſt induſtry : your genius, however extenſive it may be, would have found ample occupation on that vaſt continent, and poſterity might have been indebted to your zeal and your talents for comforts and improvements unknown to the preſent time.

If the real intereſts of mankind had been your purſuit, if it had ſeriouſly been your wiſh to diffuſe the light of reaſon over every part of the earth, how comes it, Sir, that the unenlightened and uncivilized tribes in the internal parts of America were not comprehended in the ſcheme of univerſal concord and felicity, which you profeſs in print, but violate in practice ? How comes it that thoſe *equal rights*, which you take ſo much pains to communicate to the intelligent and cultivated European, were not revealed to the untutored and uninformed Indian, and a bene-

volent effort made on your part to reclaim whole nations from the ignorance and ferocious barbariſm in which they have been enveloped from the birth of time? If it is your ambition to collect and harmonize the diſperſed and vagrant inhabitants of the earth into ſocial intercourſe with each other, the back ſettlements of that vaſt country, which your vanity pretends to have liberated and illumined, would have afforded abundant employment for your zeal, and ample exerciſe for your genius and induſtry. The immenſe and almoſt impenetrable foreſts in the Weſtern world might, by your exertions, have given place in a few years to populous towns and cities;—the pathleſs wild through which the wretched Indian explores his ſolitary way might have been converted into fruitful and well-cultivated plains, and the rude and hapleſs natives changed from ſavages into citizens and men!—A well ordered government might have ariſen in the deſart; and ruthleſs, predatory war have given way to peace, ſecurity, and comfort; but the wretched ſtate of conſtant and ferocious hoſtility approaches nearer to *your* ideas of natural right, and better ſuits the coarſe and

barbarous

barbarous texture of your mind. The ſcalping knife levelled at a Chief, gives you the idea of an axe raiſed againſt your Sovereign; it falls in perfect uniſon with your principles and your feelings, and leaves you nothing more to covet or enjoy! Diſdaining all decency and reſerve, you avow in the face of the world, that it is the *ſubverſion* and not the *formation* of ſtates that you aim at. The din of civil diſcord alone vibrates ſweet muſic to *your* ear, and *domeſtic*, not *foreign* war, is your object. The conflict of contending nations has nothing in it ſufficiently miſchievous and ſanguinary to engage your notice! The repelling of unprovoked hoſtility, or of wanton invaſion, can neither attract your admiration, nor awaken your attention; but when rebellion raiſes her terrific head above the level and controul of law, you feel intereſted in the event, and anticipate the fall of kings, of magiſtrates, and of laws; the extinction of virtue, of juſtice, and humanity!

It is not the patriotic reſiſtance of independent ſtates to foreign oppreſſion that charms and ſooths your ſoul, but private

feuds grown into inſurrection and anarchy, where decrepid age, ſcarce able to ſuſtain its declining weight beneath the preſſure of accumulated years and infirmity, receives from ſome obſcure aſſaſſin its final diſmiſſion from the world!

Where the citizen arms againſt citizen, brother againſt brother, and the child againſt its parent; in which all right is confounded, and all ages, ſexes, and conditions involved in one general and comprehenſive ruin! ſuch, Sir, are the ſcenes that rouſe you into action, and afford you guilty occupation and amuſement. When America was in revolt, you preached ſedition on the other ſide of the Atlantic.

When her independence was acknowledged, and your ſervices were no longer uſeful in the Weſtern world, you returned to Europe to aid inſurrection wherever you might find it, to ſupport the French as you had done the Yankees, and give the Diſſenters in this country every aſſiſtance in your power in their efforts to diſturb the government. We have hitherto reaſoned with you;

allow

allow us to relax a little from the ſeverity of ſober argument, and ſmile at the reform you propoſe in our conſtitution, and which, though ſubmitted to our conſideration, is accompanied by a pretty broad hint, that if we refuſe to adopt it, you will teach us better manners.

This kind of Iriſh alternative, which leaves us no choice but your own, is neither very decent nor very juſt; but as expediency, not juſtice, is your object, we muſt diſpenſe with equity and right, and make the beſt terms with your *ſuperior* and all powerful wiſdom, that our *ſhallow capacities* will admit. Some people have deemed it an impertinence that you ſhould preſume to interfere in our domeſtic concerns, and attempt to perſuade us that we are incapable to judge and to act for ourſelves; and they inſiſt upon this the more, inaſmuch as you have diſclaimed poor *Old England*, and adopted the WORLD for your Country; they have even carried their *aſſurance* and *ingratitude* ſo far, as to deny your right to excite a rebellion, though it was clearly demonſtrated to them that you could

could not poſſibly contrive to reduce the laws to be ſo many cyphers, the nobility to beggary, or the nation to ruin by any other means. You know, Sir, that it is extremely difficult to convince *obſtinate* people, and that ſome men are ſo pertinaciouſly attached to their own intereſts, and to thoſe of their fellow citizens, that all the fine arguments, fine writing, and fine ſpeeches, that ever fell from orators, authors, and poets, ſince the days of Adam, could never ſeduce them to act contrary to the one, or to violate the other.

As to your having renounced your Country by having adopted the *World*, that is logically falſe; for while England holds her ſtation in this ſublunary globe, and does not unfortunately fall through the ocean into ſome other ſyſtem, or is not caught by the tail of ſome itinerant comet travelling for pleaſure or profit, and run away with, God knows where, into the regions of ſpace, it can be eaſily proved that ſhe conſtitutes a part of that very World from whence you condeſcend to date your nativity; and as the *major* in all argument includes the

minor,

minor, it may be ſafely urged, that though you appear by your declaration to have *prohibited* England from claiming the *excluſive* honour of your birth, yet as one of the component parts of the earth, it is preſumed ſhe may claim (without offence or danger of being contradicted) in common with the other component parts of this terraqueous orb, the glory of having produced ſo *extraordinary* a genius; no difficulty, we truſt, will be made to this *trifling* indulgence, in favour of thoſe who feel *proud* of belonging to the ſame age and nation as yourſelf, and eſpecially as it is no where *inſinuated*, and ſtill leſs *aſſerted*, that you are a native of any *other* planet.

Having replied to this *frivolous* objection, and in a manner, it is preſumed, that you will not diſlike, it only remains to ſtate the text and context that appears to have given ſo much alarm and offence to *dull* and *ſober* people, whoſe underſtandings and principles moſt certainly bear no kind of *affinity* to your own, and to which your pamphlet and conduct is little more than mere commentary, "*combining principle and practice*

"*together.*"—"*The World* (you ſay) *is my* "*Country, and my Religion is to do good.*" No one will be hardy enough to diſpute the truth of the firſt part of this *ſublime* paſſage; and if captious people, for the ſake of argument, or envious people, for the ſake of detraction, or people of a ſuſpicious nature, inclined to doubt all virtue but their own, from a reluctance to confide in any but themſelves, ſhould cavil at the word, or queſtion the juſtice of its application in the preſent inſtance, they have only to refer to your late publication, to be convinced of their error.—They will there perceive how forcibly you recommend an equal diſtribution of all the comforts of this life among the ſons and daughters of Adam.

They will there perceive, that thoſe who by their induſtry, their bravery, or their talents, or thoſe of their anceſtors, poſſeſs a ſplendid independence, are called upon to ſhare it with thoſe who have nothing; that is, with thoſe whoſe ſtupidity diſqualifies them, or whoſe idleneſs prevents their providing for themſelves.—No doubt but every raſcal and vagabond in the nation will approve

prove of your method of doing *good*, and profeſs *your* religion; it is ſweetened to their palate, and muſt delight them. You are accuſed of ſtriking out a new path, a new mode of thinking; but every man has his own ideas of right, for equity you know, Sir, is not a tangible thing like a gauging rod, but a mere abſtract propoſition, meaning one thing with the late benevolent Mr. Howard, and another with the famous Sixteen-ſtring Jack, who, unfortunately, poor man, fell a victim ſome years ſince, for differing in opinion on this very ſubject, with twelve gentlemen leſs liberal minded than himſelf in the Old Bailey. How far *you* may be diſpoſed to think that he was in the right, and ill treated by being hanged, is unneceſſary to inquire; but this much is certain, that he attempted, (though he failed and periſhed in the attempt) to reduce to *practice* what you ſo ardently lay down in *theory*.

He had not, indeed, proceeded ſo far as you adviſe *us* to go, but this may be owing to his not having the means, or to his not having your knowledge or intrepidity, or to

his not having informed himſelf as well as you appear to have done, of the rent-roll of every nobleman's eſtate in England; the amount of the King's civil liſt, and of the public revenue; and not to any want of inclination, ſcruples of conſcience, or delicacy; for it is very well known, that he had as few incumbrances of the latter as yourſelf.

His views of equality, certainly leſs enlarged and extenſive than your's, went no farther than to repair the partiality of fortune, by dividing with thoſe whom he occaſionly met, and believed to poſſeſs more of the *good things* of this world than himſelf.—Your plan, it muſt be acknowledged, is far more general, and yet methinks there is a degree of generoſity in it towards Crown heads (from whom you have ſo *little to expect*) that militates very much againſt your own ſyſtem and principles of œconomy.—To be ſure, you have docked them and trimmed them as cloſe as game cocks, but cloſe as you have cut them, you might have done it much more; and great as your retrenchments and improvements are in the public expenditure, there is ſtill room for

much greater: you offer to allow to his Majeſty (God bleſs him) the ſum of ten thouſand pounds per annum.—What think you, Sir, of propoſing to ſome of the many ragged gentlemen in this metropolis who are out of employ, to perform the regal functions by contract, as corporate towns contract with paviours and lamplighters, or the city with ſcavengers?

Contract work is ſometimes cheap, you know, and inſtead of paying ten thouſand pounds, we might, perhaps, find ſome journeyman taylor or diſcarded exciſeman who would do it for as many hundreds, and this, if you will give yourſelf the trouble to count it, would amount in as many years to the ſum of ninety thouſand pounds, which *you* will, no doubt, confeſs, is too great a ſum to be thrown away.

Now, according to Voltaire's eſtimate of the longevity of Kings, twenty-five years are the very utmoſt limits he aſſigns to ſovereigns in general, and the ſaving that would accrue from this notable ſcheme in each reign, would amount in that time to

the enormous, but exhilarating ſum of two millions, two hundred and fifty thouſand pounds; your ſkill in arithmetic, Sir, will enable you to correct any error that may appear in the calculation.

With reſpect to the Peerage, you appear to have departed from your uſual accuracy and conſiſtency in allowing them any portion of what they inherit by deſcent or what they have acquired; for having taken away their *titles*, what poſſible uſe can they have for their *fortunes?* I ſhould therefore propoſe, as a very beneficial amendment to this important article of national reform that you have offered to public notice, that not only all titles ſhould be extinguiſhed, but all property confiſcated. The numerous and ſplendid eſtates of our nobility and gentry, being once thrown into the great maſs of public wealth, would naturally increaſe the incomes which your philanthropy has generouſly allotted to the old and infirm, the diſſolute and indigent, and infallibly preſerve indolence and diſſipation from the impertinent taunts and jeers of frugality and induſtry.

Having

Having reduced the throne to the ſize of a joint-ſtool, and rendered it as bare of uſeful and ornamental drapery as the bum of an unfledged ſparrow, and having got happily rid of thoſe ſtumbling blocks to your *ſmack* and *ſmooth* ſyſtem (the King and Houſe of Lords) there remains little more to fill up the great outline of your extenſive and patriotic plan of reform, than to annihilate at one ſtroke our army and navy, ſell our ſhipping for firewood, diſmiſs the judges, open the priſon doors, bankrupt Jack Ketch, and proclaim the equal rights of man throughout the Britiſh dominions. Your friends, Sir, were indulging themſelves with the pleaſing proſpect of ſeeing this vaſt and comprehenſive ſcheme of national reform carried into ſucceſsful execution, when an unguarded paſſage in your late publication, and which certainly muſt have eſcaped from your pen in a lucid interval of truſt and reaſon, was quoted from your book, and plunged them into the profoundeſt melancholy. Sir, it contradicts the whole of what you had aſſerted: it proves the very reverſe of what you labour to eſtabliſh, and will inevitably fruſ-

trate

trate the great and glorious projects which your *magnificent* mind had conceived.

It is repugnant to the doctrines you hold, and hoſtile to your avowed deſigns: it comprehends a faithful deſcription and definition of the very government you are endeavouring to ſubvert; and with men who reflect as they read, and which you need not be told is done by every man in this country, it will moſt aſſuredly counteract your deſigns, and compel you to renounce all hopes of ſucceſs. It is ſubjoined for your peruſal, and by way of caution to you in future, as conſiſtency is of far greater import in the hazardous and difficult *buſineſs* you profeſs than you may ſuſpect. Suffice it to ſay, that if it had not been for this unfortunate and ill-timed blunder, and the current of public opinion being ſo ſtrongly againſt you, *great things* might have been achieved: as it is, you have aſſigned the beſt of all poſſible reaſons why the people ſhould be ſatisfied with their King, Lords, and Commons; and whom to oppoſe, or even to ſuſpect, after the certificate of capacity and fidelity you have

have given in the following paſſage, would be madneſs or folly in the extreme :—"*The government of a free country, properly ſpeaking, is not in the perſons, but in the laws, and when they are adminiſtered, the whole of civil government is performed.*"—Now, Sir, as every man feels, and, indeed, acknowledges, that the laws are well adminiſtered, what more is required to complete the performance of civil government, but that every man ſhould be grateful for the peace and ſecurity he enjoys, and proud that his country is ſo ably, and ſo happily governed? We will not preſs you to anſwer a queſtion ſo hoſtile to your deſigns, but ſubmit it to the conſideration of thoſe whoſe felicity you would interrupt, and whoſe power you would annihilate, and leave them to make the anſwer whenever you or your aſſociates recommend inſurrection and rebellion.

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